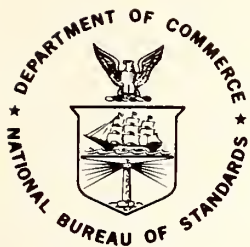


C13.20/2 68-76



Voluntary Product Standard

PS 68-76

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE/National Bureau of Standards

**MARKING OF ARTICLES
MADE OF SILVER
IN COMBINATION WITH GOLD**



ANSI/VPS PS 68-76

NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS

The National Bureau of Standards¹ was established by an act of Congress March 3, 1901. The Bureau's overall goal is to strengthen and advance the Nation's science and technology and facilitate their effective application for public benefit. To this end, the Bureau conducts research and provides: (1) a basis for the Nation's physical measurement system, (2) scientific and technological services for industry and government, (3) a technical basis for equity in trade, and (4) technical services to promote public safety. The Bureau consists of the Institute for Basic Standards, the Institute for Materials Research, the Institute for Applied Technology, the Institute for Computer Sciences and Technology, the Office for Information Programs, and the Office of Experimental Technology Incentives Program.

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Office of Standard Reference Data — Office of Information Activities — Office of Technical Publications — Library — Office of International Standards — Office of International Relations.

¹ Headquarters and Laboratories at Gaithersburg, Maryland, unless otherwise noted; mailing address Washington, D.C. 20234.

² Located at Boulder, Colorado 80302.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, Juanita M. Kreps, Secretary

Dr. Sidney Harman, Under Secretary
Jordan J. Baruch, Assistant Secretary for Science and Technology

NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS, Ernest Ambler, Acting Director

Voluntary Product Standard PS 68-76

Marking of Articles Made of Silver in Combination with Gold

**Approved by the American National Standards Institute on
April 18, 1977, as American National Standard ANSI/VPS PS 68-76**

Abstract

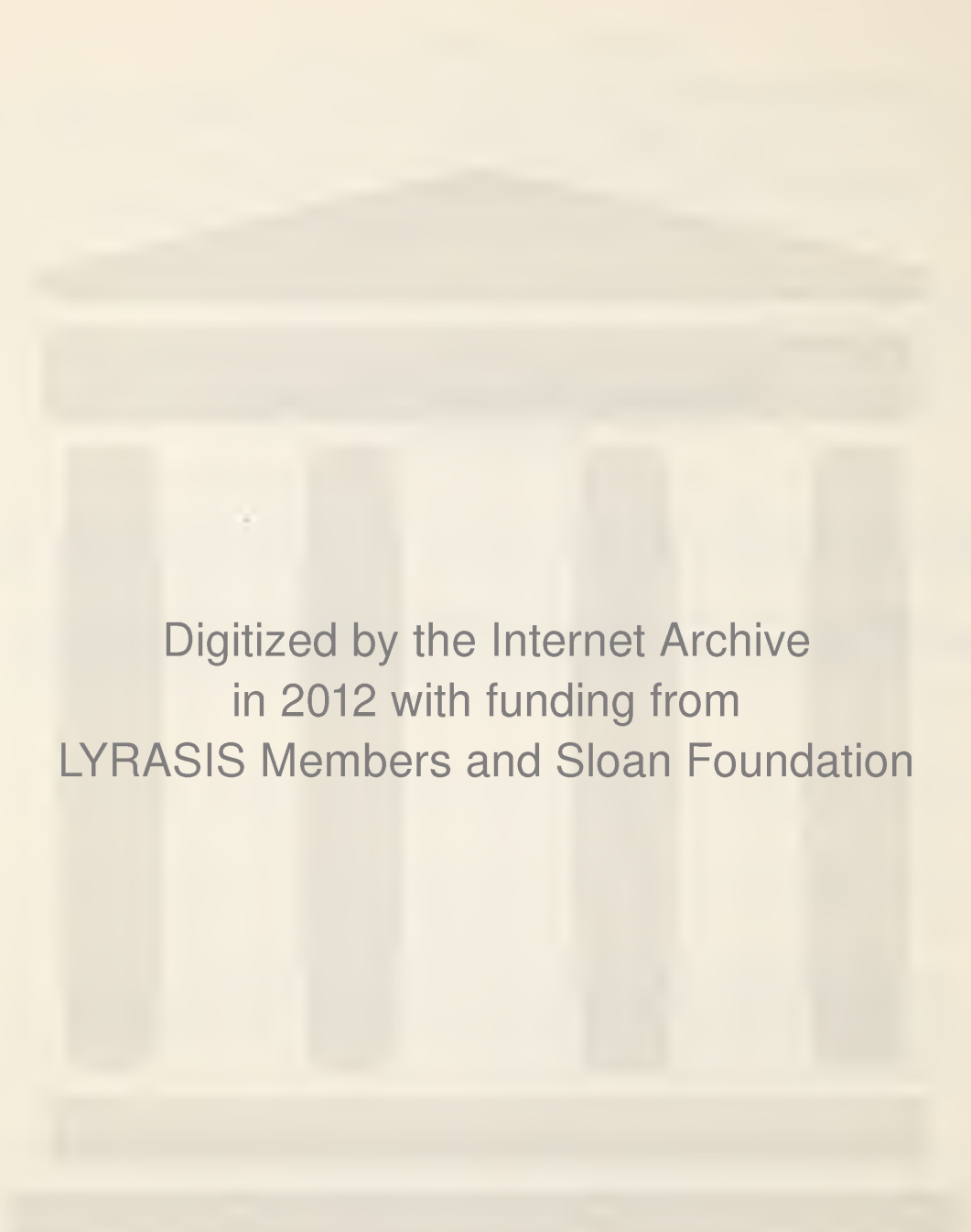
This Voluntary Product Standard covers the marking of articles made of silver in combination with gold, as herein defined, offered for sale in the United States of America. Requirements are given for the marking of articles made of two metals. Definitions of trade terms used and methods for identifying products that comply with this standard are included.

Key words: Jewelry, "Silver/Gold," marking of.

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VOLUNTARY PRODUCT STANDARDS

Voluntary Product Standards are developed under procedures published by the Department of Commerce in Part 10, Title 15, of the Code of Federal Regulations. The purpose of the standards is to establish nationally recognized requirements for products, and to provide all concerned interests with a basis for common understanding of the characteristics of the products. The National Bureau of Standards administers the *Voluntary Product Standards* program as a supplement to the activities of the private sector standardizing organizations.

Establishment of a VOLUNTARY PRODUCT STANDARD

The role of the National Bureau of Standards in the establishment of a Voluntary Product Standard is to (1) act as an unbiased coordinator in the development of the standard, (2) provide editorial assistance in the preparation of the standard, (3) supply such assistance and review as is required to assure the technical soundness of the standard, (4) seek satisfactory adjustment of valid points of disagreement, (5) determine the compliance with the criteria of the Department's procedures, (6) provide secretarial functions for each committee appointed under the Department's procedures, and (7) publish the standard as a public document.

Producers, distributors, users, consumers, and other interested groups contribute to the establishment of a *Voluntary Product Standard* by (1) initiating and participating in the development of the standard, (2) providing technical or other related counsel as appropriate relating to the standard, (3) promoting the use of and support for the standard, and (4) assisting in keeping the standard current with respect to advancing technology and marketing practices.

Use of a VOLUNTARY PRODUCT STANDARD

The use of a *Voluntary Product Standard* is voluntary; the National Bureau of Standards has no regulatory power in the enforcement of the provisions of the standards. However, since the standards represent a consensus of all interested groups, their provisions are likely to become established as trade customs. In addition, when a standard is made a part of a legal document, such as a sales contract or code, compliance with the standard is enforceable.

The benefits derived from *Voluntary Product Standards* are in direct proportion to their general recognition and actual use. Producers and distributors whose products meet the requirements of a *Voluntary Product Standard* may refer to the standard in advertising and on labels to promote greater public understanding of or confidence in their products. Purchasers may order products conforming to the requirements of the standards.

For copies of the *Voluntary Product Standards* procedures or for more information concerning the development and use of these standards you may write to: Standards Development Services Section, National Bureau of Standards, Washington, D.C. 20234.

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Marking of Articles Made of Silver in Combination With Gold

Effective April 12, 1976 (See section 5.)

(This Standard, which was initiated by the Jewelers Vigilance Committee, has been developed under the *Procedures for the Development of Voluntary Product Standards* of the U.S. Department of Commerce as a revalidation of CS 51-35, *Marking Articles Made of Silver in Combination with Gold*. See Section 6, *History of Project*, for further information.)

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Voluntary Product Standard is to establish nationally recognized marking requirements for articles made of silver in combination with gold and to provide producers, distributors, and users with a basis for common understanding of the characteristics of this product.

2. SCOPE

This Voluntary Product Standard covers the marking of articles made of silver in combination with gold, as herein defined, offered for sale in the United States of America. Definitions of trade terms used and methods for identifying products that comply with this standard are included.

3. REQUIREMENTS

3.1. General—Products represented as complying with this Voluntary Product Standard shall meet all the requirements specified herein.

3.2. Marking of article parts made of two metals (visually indistinguishable)—An article in which the parts made of the two metals are so combined as not to be visually separable and easily distinguishable one from the other (e.g., where the gold covers the entire article, or where white gold is combined with silver), may have applied thereto a quality mark consisting of "Sterling and" or "Sterling +" followed by a fraction representing the proportion of the weight of the alloyed gold to the weight of the entire metal in such article, and a karat mark representing the actual karat fineness of the gold covering; for example, "Sterling and 1/5 10K" or "Sterling + 1/5 10K."

3.2.1. Karat mark—No article as described in paragraph 3.2, shall have applied to it the karat mark unless the alloyed-gold content is by weight at least 1/20 of the weight of the entire metal in the article.

3.2.2. Karat and sterling mark—The mark is so applied that the karat mark and its fractional prefix shall follow directly the sterling mark, except when the fractional prefix is 1/2, the

karat mark may directly precede the sterling mark, for example, "1/2 10K+Sterling."

3.3. Marking of article parts made of two metals (visually distinguishable)—An article in which the parts made of the two metals are so combined as to be visually separable and easily distinguishable one from the other (e.g., where the gold is used for ornamentation and where there is a readily visible contrast in color between the silver and the gold), may have applied thereto a quality mark consisting of the word "Sterling," followed by a karat mark representing the actual karat fineness of the gold, which shall apply to all parts or portions of such article, resembling or appearing to be gold; for example, "Sterling and 10K," or "Sterling + 10K" provided that the mark is so applied that the karat mark shall directly follow the sterling mark.

3.3.1. Fractions—The mark may also include a fraction representing the proportion of weight of the alloyed gold part to the weight of the entire metal in the article, if desired.

3.3.2. Application of marks—If a quality mark is applied to articles as described in 3.2 and 3.3 herein, the quality shall be designated by the quality marks herein provided.

3.3.3. Metals other than gold and silver—No article containing metal parts other than sterling silver and gold of 10 karat or better shall have applied to it the quality marks as prescribed in 3.2 and 3.3, herein.

3.3.4. Fineness—No quality mark indicating the presence of gold shall be applied to articles (made of sterling silver in combination with gold) composed in part of gold of less than 10 karat fineness.

3.4. Fractions—All portions of the quality marks applied to an article shall be equal in size and equally visible, legible, clear, and distinct. The numerator of the fraction used to designate the weight of the gold alloy shall always be 1, that is, the only fractions recognized by this Standard shall be 1/2, 1/3, 1/4, 1/5, 1/6, 1/7, 1/8, 1/9, 1/10, 1/15, and 1/20.

3.5. Tolerance—The tolerances for fineness of silver and gold shall be those prescribed by the National Gold and Silver Stamping Act of 1906¹ or any amendment thereof. The actual weight of the alloyed-gold content of an article shall be not more than 10 percent less than the amount of the alloyed gold claimed by the quality mark. The claimed amount of gold is determined by multiplying the total metal content of the article by the fraction preceding the karat mark. Thus, in an article marked "Sterling + 1/5 10K" and having a total metal content of 5 dwt, the claimed alloyed-gold content is 1 dwt and the actual alloyed-gold content shall be not less than 0.9 dwt.

3.6. Exemptions—Unless otherwise required by the National Gold and Silver Stamping Act of 1906 exemptions recognized in the jewelry trade and not to be considered in any assay for quality include joints, catches, screws, pin stems, pins of scarf pins, hat pins, etc., posts and separable backs of lapel buttons, springs, and metallic parts completely and permanently encased in a non-metallic covering.

3.6.1. Optical exemptions—Exemptions recognized in the optical trade and not to be considered in any assay for quality shall include screws, dowels, cores, and/or inner windings of comfort cable temples, metal parts when completely and permanently encased with zylonite or any equivalent plastic material, and, for ox-fords, the handle and catch.

3.7. Trademark—Any silver and gold article having applied thereto a quality mark, shall also have applied thereto, and adjacent immediately to such mark, and equally visible, legible, clear, and distinct, the name or a trademark duly applied for or registered under the laws of the United States, of the manufacturer or seller of such article or the trade name of the manufacturer or seller. Initials shall not be used in lieu of a name, unless registered as a trademark with the U.S. Patent Office.

3.8. Class, pattern type, or style mark—If an article has applied to it a quality mark conforming to the requirements of this standard, and the name or a trademark duly applied for or registered under the laws of the United States, of the manufacturer or seller of such article, it may also have applied to it numerals or other indicia to identify the class, pattern, type, or style of the article. No class, pattern, type, or style mark, whether applied to an article, as defined herein or to any other merchandise of similar appearance, shall be of such character or in such location as to be susceptible of confusion with or for a quality mark.

4. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Standard, the following definitions shall apply:

Article—An article means any article of merchandise composed of sterling silver in combination with gold.

Apply or Applied—Apply or applied includes any method or means of application or attachment to, or of use on, or in conjunction with, or in relation to an article, whether such application, attachment, or use is to, on, by, in, or with (1) the article itself, (2) anything attached to the article, (3) anything to which the article is attached, (4) anything in, or on, which the article is, or (5) any bill, invoice, order, statement, letter, advertisement, or anything so used or placed as to lead to a reasonable belief that it refers to the article in question.

Gold—Gold means 24 karat gold or any alloy of the element gold of not less than 10 karat fineness.

Quality mark—Quality mark means any mark, letter, figure, numeral, symbol, sign or device, or any combinations thereof as herein defined, indicating or purporting to indicate that any article is composed of gold and silver, or the quality, fineness, quantity, weight, thickness, proportion, or kind of gold and silver in an article.

Sterling or Sterling Silver—Sterling or sterling silver means an alloy of 925/1000 parts pure silver within the tolerances permitted by the National Gold and Silver Stamping Act of 1906.

Karat—A Karat is 1/24 part by weight of the metallic element gold in an article. For example, "10 Kt" or "10 Karat Gold" means that the metallic element gold contained in the article constitutes 10/24 by weight of the entire article.

5. EFFECTIVE DATE AND IDENTIFICATION

The effective date of this Standard is April 12, 1976. As of the effective date, reference to PS 68-76, may be made in contracts, codes, advertising, invoices, product labels, and the like, but no product may be advertised or represented in any manner which would imply or tend to imply approval or endorsement of that product by the National Bureau of Standards, the Department of Commerce, or by the Federal Government.

The following statements are suggested for use in representing products as conforming to all requirements of this Standard:

¹ For full text see 15 U.S.C. 294 et seq.

- (1) "This article conforms to all requirements established in Voluntary Product Standard PS 68-76, developed and published in accordance with the U.S. Department of Commerce *Procedures for the Development of Voluntary Product Standards*. Full responsibility for the conformance of this product to the standard is assumed by (name and address of producer or distributor)."
- (2) "Conforms to PS 68-76, (name and address of producer or distributor)."

6. HISTORY OF PROJECT

In 1935 Commercial Standard CS 51-35, *Marking Articles Made of Silver in Combination with Gold*, was developed at the request of the New England Manufacturing Jewelers' and Silversmiths' Association (renamed Manufacturing Jewelers and Silversmiths Association, Inc.), supported by the Jewelers Vigilance Committee, Inc., and was published in July 1935.

In December 1974 the Jewelers Vigilance Committee, Inc., the recognized trade association for the jewelry industry, requested that the National Bureau of Standards initiate a revalidation of CS 51-35 under the *Procedures for the Development of Voluntary Product Standards*. Appoint-

ments were made to the Standing Committee, and the Jewelers Vigilance Committee, Inc., recommendation was forwarded to them in July 1975 for review. The Standing Committee indicated the standard should be revalidated and in December 1975 they were asked to vote on the appropriateness of the proposal. In February 1976 all members of the Standing Committee approved the proposal to revalidate CS 51-35.

The new edition of the standard was designated Voluntary Product Standard PS 68-76, *Marking of Articles Made of Silver in Combination with Gold*, and became effective on April 12, 1976.

Technical Standards Coordinator:

C. W. Devereux
Standards Development Services Section
National Bureau of Standards
Washington, D.C. 20234

7. STANDING COMMITTEE

A Standing Committee has been appointed to assist in keeping this Voluntary Product Standard up to date. The names of the members of the committee are available from the Standards Development Services Section, Washington, D.C. 20234, which serves as the secretariat of the committee.

NBS TECHNICAL PUBLICATIONS

PERIODICALS

JOURNAL OF RESEARCH reports National Bureau of Standards research and development in physics, mathematics, and chemistry. It is published in two sections, available separately:

• **Physics and Chemistry (Section A)**

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DIMENSIONS/NBS (formerly Technical News Bulletin)—This monthly magazine is published to inform scientists, engineers, businessmen, industry, teachers, students, and consumers of the latest advances in science and technology, with primary emphasis on the work at NBS. The magazine highlights and reviews such issues as energy research, fire protection, building technology, metric conversion, pollution abatement, health and safety, and consumer product performance. In addition, it reports the results of Bureau programs in measurement standards and techniques, properties of matter and materials, engineering standards and services, instrumentation, and automatic data processing.

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The following current-awareness and literature-survey bibliographies are issued periodically by the Bureau:

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Liquefied Natural Gas. A literature survey issued quarterly. Annual subscription: \$20.00.

NOTE: At present the principal publication outlet for these data is the Journal of Physical and Chemical Reference Data (JPCRD) published quarterly for NBS by the American Chemical Society (ACS) and the American Institute of Physics (AIP). Subscriptions, reprints, and supplements available from ACS, 1155 Sixteenth St. N.W., Wash. D. C. 20056.

Building Science Series—Disseminates technical information developed at the Bureau on building materials, components, systems, and whole structures. The series presents research results, test methods, and performance criteria related to the structural and environmental functions and the durability and safety characteristics of building elements and systems.

Technical Notes—Studies or reports which are complete in themselves but restrictive in their treatment of a subject. Analogous to monographs but not so comprehensive in scope or definitive in treatment of the subject area. Often serve as a vehicle for final reports of work performed at NBS under the sponsorship of other government agencies.

Voluntary Product Standards—Developed under procedures published by the Department of Commerce in Part 10, Title 15, of the Code of Federal Regulations. The purpose of the standards is to establish nationally recognized requirements for products, and to provide all concerned interests with a basis for common understanding of the characteristics of the products. NBS administers this program as a supplement to the activities of the private sector standardizing organizations.

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Order following NBS publications—NBSIR's and FIPS from the National Technical Information Services, Springfield, Va. 22161.

Federal Information Processing Standards Publications (FIPS PUBS)—Publications in this series collectively constitute the Federal Information Processing Standards Register. Register serves as the official source of information in the Federal Government regarding standards issued by NBS pursuant to the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 as amended, Public Law 89-306 (79 Stat. 1127), and as implemented by Executive Order 11717 (38 FR 12315, dated May 11, 1973) and Part 6 of Title 15 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations).

NBS Interagency Reports (NBSIR)—A special series of interim or final reports on work performed by NBS for outside sponsors (both government and non-government). In general, initial distribution is handled by the sponsor; public distribution is by the National Technical Information Services (Springfield, Va. 22161) in paper copy or microfiche form.

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